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NOTES ON GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Mammalia, Rodentia, Echimyidae, *Phyllomys blainvilii* (Jourdan, 1837): Range extension and new geographic distribution map.

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The genus *Phyllomys* Lund, 1839 belongs to an arboreal radiation of echimyid rodents distributed along eastern Brazil from central Paraíba to northern Rio Grande do Sul. Throughout this large distribution, *Phyllomys* predominantly dwells in the broadleaf evergreen forests of coastal Atlantic Forest and associated habitats such as *Araucaria* forests and mangroves, but also inhabits semi-deciduous forests of Caatinga and Cerrado (Leite 2003).

The taxonomic and systematic knowledge regarding the genus *Phyllomys* has been improved by important studies during the past few years, based on extensive museum analyses and field sampling efforts (Emmons et al. 2002; Leite and Patton 2002; Leite 2003; Galewski et al. 2005, Carvalho and Salles 2004). According to these studies, the genus currently harbors 12 species, with precise diagnoses and currently known collecting localities plotted in distribution maps.

Phyllomys blainvilii is a small- to medium-sized species, with dorsal body color ochraceous-brown streaked with black, flanks paler than dorsum and ventral region pale cream-yellowish (Emmons et al. 2002; Leite 2003); the dorsal fur is spiny, with aristiform hairs short and narrow. The tail is robust, usually slightly longer than head and body, thickly covered with long blackish-brown or gold hair forming a tuft at the tip (Emmons et al. 2002; Leite 2003).

The known collecting localities of *P. blainvilii* are distributed in northeastern Brazil, from southern Ceará to northern Minas Gerais (Figure 1), reaching the coastal region only in Alagoas and Pernambuco. It inhabits primarily lowland semi-deciduous forests, patches of humid forest within the biome Caatinga (locally called *brejos* or *brejos de altitude*) and coastal humid forested areas.

Phyllomys blainvilii is morphologically similar and can be confused with *P. lamarum*, a species presenting partially overlapping distribution in the northeastern Brazilian coast (probably in Paraíba and Pernambuco). Although similar, these two species can be distinguished by the following characters: the former exhibits a haired tail with a long bushy tuft at the tip, and an inconspicuously spiny rump, while the latter has an almost naked tail with prominent and strong spines on the rump. Moreover, the skull of *P. blainvilii* is longer and narrower than that of *P. lamarum*, with smaller cheekteeth, a narrower zygomatic arch, smaller bullae, slender mesopterygoid fossa, shorter nasals, and longer palate (Emmons et al. 2002; Leite 2003).

A single specimen of *P. blainvilii* was captured in the municipality of Mataraca, state of Paraíba (near the border with the state of Rio Grande do Norte), in the forest remnants of Lyondel Chemical Company, geographical coordinates: 06º30' S, 34º58' W, by B.A.T.P. Campos, field number BC 6, during a field trip in October, 2005. The specimen, an adult tailless female, pregnant with two embryos, was trapped in a Young live trap set on the ground and baited with a mixture of ground peanut, rolled oats, vegetable oil, and bananas. The voucher specimen, preserved as skin and skull, with the carcass, embryos and tissue samples (liver) in ethanol, was deposited at the Coleção de Mamíferos do Departamento de Sistemática e Ecologia da UFPB, João Pessoa, Paraíba, Brazil (UFPB 5690).

The specimen UFPB 5690 was captured in a second-growth Restinga forest (approximately 30 years old). Restinga is a vegetation mosaic that covers the Quaternary sand marine deposits of coastal Brazil usually associated to the adjacent Atlantic Forest complex (Araújo and Lacerda 1987; Cerqueira et al.1990). The forest presents a low and sparse canopy, with trees reaching 5-7 m, few emergent trees with 8-9 m at most, and large concentration of scrubs.

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The individual of *P. blainvilii* reported here represents the first record of this species in Paraíba, extending the known geographic distribution of this species nearly 150 km to the north, since the previous northernmost documented record for this species was Refúgio Ecológico Charles Darwin, Igarassú, Pernambuco, at 07°50' S, 34°54' W (Leite 2003). This record also extends the distribution of the genus 40 km to the north. Such range extensions reinforce the urgent need of mammal inventories in Brazil, especially in northeastern Atlantic Forest.

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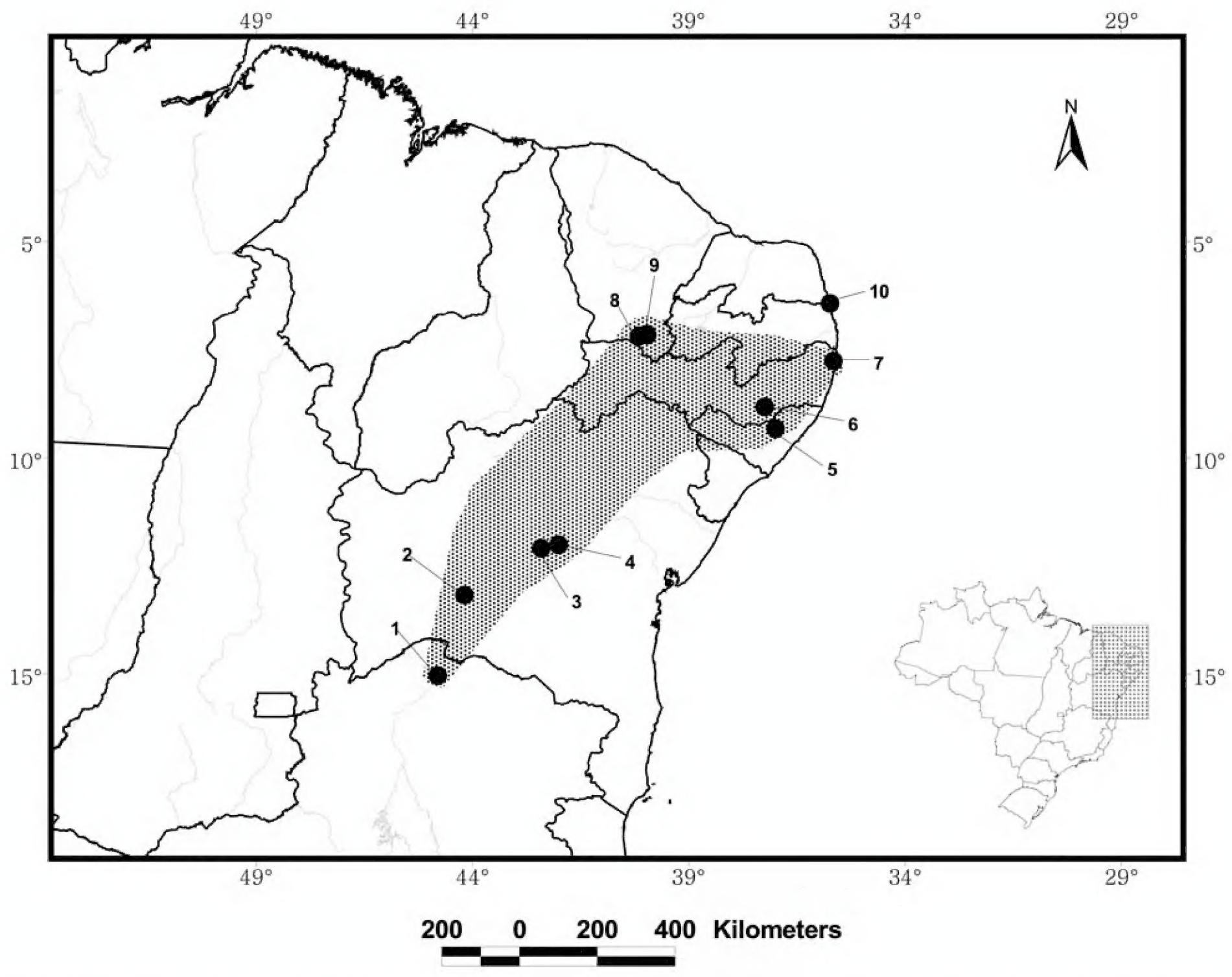

Figure 1. *Phyllomys blainvilii* distribution map; the stippled area on the major map correspond to the previous distribution of *P. blainvilli* (Leite 2003). Brazil: Minas Gerais: 1, Mocambinho. Bahia: 2, Bom Jesus da Lapa; 3, Fazenda Santa Rita; 4, Várzea da Canabrava. Alagoas: 5, Sítio Angelim. Pernambuco: 6, Sítio Cavaquinho; 7, Igarassú. Ceará: 8, Chapada do Araripe; 9, Crato. Paraíba: 10, Mataraca.

NOTES ON GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION

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